

# Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

INSIDE  
TRACKS

The Newsletter of Region One

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Spring 2001

## FWP Commission Adopts Limited Either-sex Whitetail Deer Season for Northwest Montana



**NORTHWEST MONTANA HUNTERS** will be able to take a doe or buck whitetail during the first eight days of the 2001 big game season.

*Biologists say that the regulation should relieve some of the hunting pressure on young bucks so more of them can reach maturity, like this fine buck taken during the 2000 season in the Swan drainage.*

The Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission has reinstated either sex hunting for whitetailed deer during the first eight days only of the upcoming 2001 big game season in northwest Montana. Most public comment supported the return of this opportunity based on increasing numbers of whitetails noted by biologists, hunters, and landowners. In addition to reinstating antlerless hunting, the Commission also added a number of (Cont. on Page 3)

## Thank You, Charlie!

Outgoing FWP Commissioner Charlie Decker has been recognized again and again by hunters, anglers, and trappers for his unflinching support of Montana's wildlife resource use

heritage. Here is a look at some of Charlie's accomplishments during his eight years as a FWP Commissioner.

- Charlie has been a strong supporter of the heritage and utility of fur trapping and furbearer management throughout Montana
- His passion for elk and elk management paid dividends throughout his 8-year term as a commissioner. He was able to apply his experience as a founding member of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation in managing FWP programs
- He has been a staunch supporter of maintaining spring and fall black bear hunting
- Charlie founded the advanced hunter education camp in Lincoln County and has supported hunter education efforts across the state
- Commissioner Decker supported long term wildlife habitat protection through major conservation easements such as the Thompson and Fisher River Valleys easement and others throughout Montana

- Charlie helped lead the Commission through the new process of setting boating regulations to reduce user conflicts across the state

Thank you, Charlie, on behalf of FWP and Montana sportsmen for eight years of long hours, late nights and hard work! 🐾



**CHARLIE DECKER** (on the right) assists biologists and volunteers in a bighorn sheep trapping operation.

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PLEASE HELP YOURSELF





# Supervisor's Column

By Dan Vincent

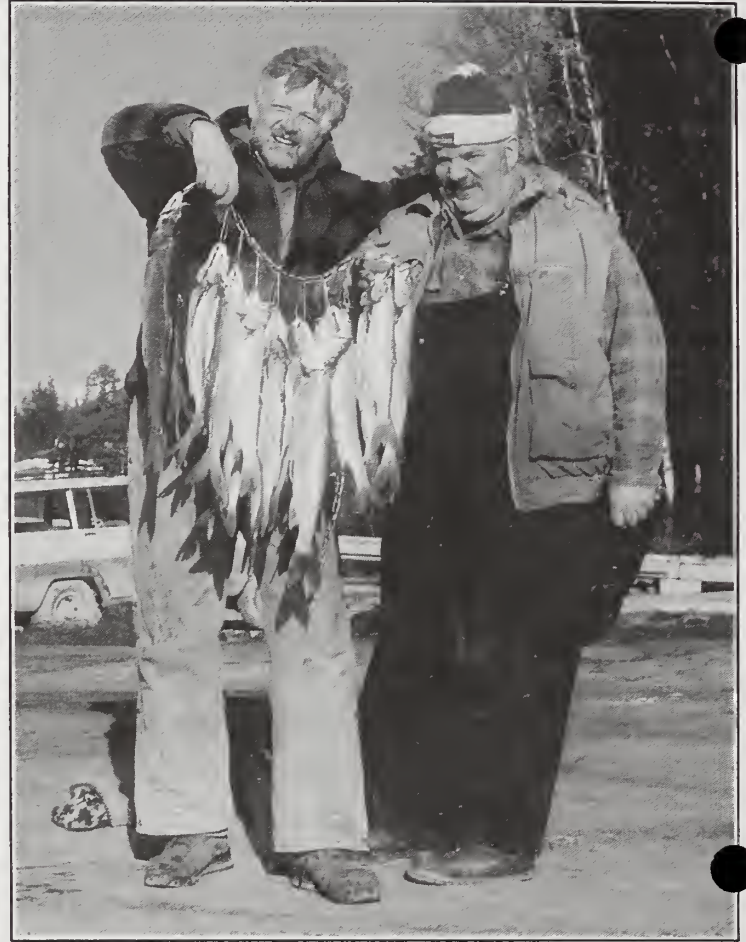
Eight years ago Governor Racicot announced his FWP Commission appointment for Northwestern Montana. He selected a fellow from his hometown of Libby, logger, outdoorsman, promoter of kid's hunting opportunities and wow—one of the Founding Fathers of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. Before I had the opportunity to meet the man, I was given a photo of him—a big burly guy, steely eyes, kinda cranky looking, wearing a t-shirt —Yikes!

I called an unnamed former boss, mentor, and now employee of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation to get the scoop on our new Commissioner. He told me what I could already tell from the photo...he's "gruff, kinda opinionated, and can be intimidating," but, he also added, "Chawllie" as he called him, has a love for the outdoors, calls it like he sees it, and he's honest. He advised me to be up-front with Charlie, tell him everything, never surprise him, don't back down when you think you're right, but **always** keep your options open.

It turns out that advice, which until now I never shared with anyone, was very sound. I followed it closely, and we developed an excellent working relationship. And, while we disagreed often, I consider him a good friend and respect his decisions. There will be other commissioners who will do a good job, but none will ever be quite like Charlie. He's been good for Northwestern Montana's hunters, anglers, and recreationists. He's listened to public concerns and has been very responsive.

One thing every new Commissioner learns is that you don't make friends being a Commissioner. And there will always be some who second-guess decisions regardless of the energy and commitment to finding acceptable solutions. But, I defy anyone who would ever claim that Charlie didn't care about Montana's resources and its people or find anyone who worked any harder, volunteering thousands of hours at meetings and on the road crisscrossing Montana, setting policies and direction for the people he represented. Charlie, we've learned a lot from you during these last eight years, but mostly how important the natural resources are to all of us. Thanks!

Finally, to Mrs. Decker, thank you on behalf of Region



**ANGLING LEADERS.** FWP Supervisor Dan Vincent and Commissioner Charlie Decker show off their catch from a fishing trip on Flathead Lake.

One staff and all the people we serve in Northwestern Montana for putting up with the thousands of phone calls (and some not so polite) at all hours of the day and night, during dinner and family gatherings. Thank you for letting Charlie be away so much of the time while attending to Commission business. You can have him back now. We will miss him! 🐾

## New Commissioner from Western Montana Takes the Helm for FWP Commission

Governor Judy Martz has appointed Rich Lane of Missoula as the new FWP Commissioner from western Montana. Lane was also named as Chairman of the Commission. Mr. Lane is a Region Manager of Smurfit-Stone Container Corporation in Missoula. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in forest science from

Pennsylvania State University in 1976, and earned a Master of Science in Industrial Forestry Operations from Virginia Tech in 1981.

Governor Martz said that Lane "has considerable experience in forestry issues and will lend tremendous insight to issues facing the Commission." Martz added that Commissioner

Lane will "work as a team with the other Commissioners, as well as with FWP, to make good decisions." Lane replaces Charlie Decker, whose term expired in February. 🐾






# FWP Commission Adopts Limited Either-sex Whitetail Deer Season for Northwest Montana

(Cont. from Page 1)

B-Tags for Region One in Hunting Districts 101, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 130, and 132.

For black bear, the Commission maintained the existing spring season length in all bear hunting units. However, hunters will now be required to validate their bear hunting license for northwest Montana hunting units that

close on May 31 (103, 106, 107). Bear hunters who validate for those units may only hunt in those units. Bear hunters who do not validate may hunt anywhere else in the state except in those three units. The Commission adopted the validation to reduce the late-season shift of hunters into the units with higher grizzly bear densities.

For mountain lion, the Commission voted to require a permit awarded through a drawing to kill a lion in three hunting districts in the Libby area (hunting districts 100, 103, 104). Non-residents will be limited to 10 percent of the permits awarded. Hunters will still be able to chase lions from December 1-April 14 in all northwest Montana hunting districts. 


## FWP Bear Identification Training Website Now Available

A voluntary educational program aimed at ensuring black bear hunters are able to successfully distinguish black bears from grizzly bears is now on line on the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks web site.

The new training is free and can be accessed at [fwp.state.mt.us/bearid](http://fwp.state.mt.us/bearid).

Hunters or others interested in learning to accurately identify bears are able to print a certificate of completion if they score 80 percent or better on the training. The questions are randomly selected from a large pool of possible questions, so no test is identical and taking the same test twice is

nearly impossible. Participants take a pre- and post-exam to help assess their progress. The program also provides instant feedback, including an explanation of the correct answer so the user can learn from mistakes.

To access the bear identification computer training program, go to [fwp.state.mt.us/bearid](http://fwp.state.mt.us/bearid). For more information or to comment on this new training approach, contact Thomas Baumeister at 406-444-4046 or by email: [tbaumeister@state.mt.us](mailto:tbaumeister@state.mt.us). 



### BEAR HUNTERS—Know Your Target!

Look for a combination of characteristics



Color and size are sometimes misleading

**Be Sure Before You Shoot!**

**HUNTERS IN THE KNOW** realize how difficult it can be to distinguish between black and grizzly bears. Can you name the species in the two photos at left? Note that the hump and grizzled appearance of the hide identifies the bear in the top photo as a grizzly. The high pointed ears, roman nose, and uniform brown color of the bear in the bottom photo shows it to be a black bear.



# Region One Lobby Features New Displays

The FWP Region 1 Lobby now features new displays on Trapping and



**THE PONDEROSA PINE TREE**  
Display opens a window to the past as it illustrates cambium use by early residents of what is now Montana

Furbearer Management, Past and Present; Historic Ponderosa Pine Peel Tree; Thompson and Fisher River Valleys Land Conservation Agreement; Lake and River Fish; and northwest Montana Birds (Common Loon and Nest Identification).

The new displays are part of FWP's

2001 Centennial Observance. Last month more than 120 people attended our open house celebrating FWP's centennial, centennial film, and the new displays.

Everyone is invited to stop in and view these beautiful displays at the FWP office on North Meridian Road.



**ENJOYING A MOMENT** together at the Feb. 15 open house and centennial celebration are Bud Moore (long-time Montana conservationist and one of the subjects of the furbearer display), Jake Barton (oldtime trapper Fuzzy Barton's son) and Wildlife Biologist Tim Their.

**INSIDE TRACKS** is published by Region One



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Wildlife & Parks**

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Jim Vashro, Fisheries Manager  
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Noemí Barta, Office Manager  
Brian Marotz, Fisheries Mitigation Coordinator  
Alan Wood, Wildlife Mitigation Coordinator  
John Fraley, Information Officer, Newsletter Editor  
FWP Director, Jeff Hagener

(Governor Judy Martz appointed Director Hagener to replace Patrick Graham who did an excellent job over the past eight years.  
Thank you, Pat!)

## INSIDE TRACKS

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